



For Release: Thursday, February 13, 2020

20-298-PHI

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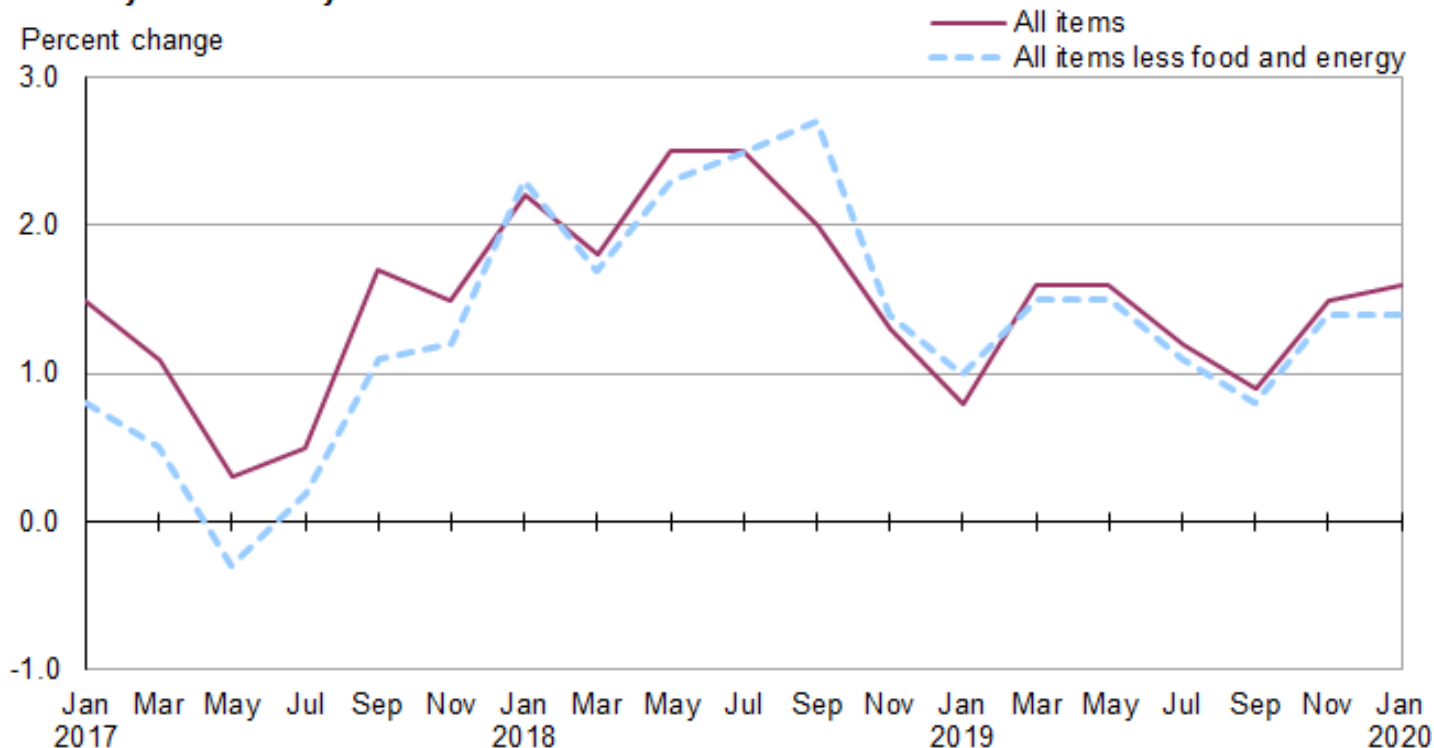
Consumer Price Index, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria – January 2020

Area prices up 0.5 percent since November, 1.6 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria advanced 0.5 percent from November to January, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the recent increase was due largely to a 0.5-percent rise in the all items less food and energy index. The food index and energy index also increased since November, up 0.4 percent and 1.1 percent, respectively. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U advanced 1.6 percent, reflecting a 1.4-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Since January 2019, the energy index and food index also advanced, up 5.8 and 1.2 percent, respectively. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, January 2017–January 2020



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Following a 0.4-percent increase from September to November, the food index advanced 0.4 percent over the last two months. Prices for food away from home increased 0.7 percent, and those for food at home inched up 0.1 percent. Within the food at home component, prices were higher for nonfrozen noncarbonated juices and drinks, carbonated drinks, and milk, while prices were lower for pork chops and apples, among others.

Food prices increased 1.2 percent over the year. Prices were higher for food away from home (3.0 percent), while those for food at home declined 0.4 percent since January 2019.

Energy

Since November, the energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, advanced 1.1 percent, due to higher prices for gasoline (1.6 percent) and utility (piped) gas service (4.3 percent). Prices were lower for electricity (-0.3 percent) over the past two months.

Energy prices increased 5.8 percent since January 2019, due to higher prices for gasoline, up 10.8 percent. Over the year, prices also rose for electricity (2.2 percent), while utility (piped) gas prices declined 1.1 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.5 percent since November. The advance was led by higher prices for shelter (0.7 percent) and household furnishings and operations (4.3 percent) over the last two months. Decreased prices for apparel (-2.9 percent), among others, moderated the increase in the all items less food and energy index from November to January.

Since January 2019, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.4 percent. Prices were higher for shelter (2.3 percent) and medical care (3.5 percent), among others. Apparel prices decreased 7.7 percent since January 2019, the index's largest 12-month decrease since March 2013.

Table A. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month
January.....	-0.2	1.5	0.2	1.5	0.9	2.2	0.5	0.8	0.5	1.6
March	0.8	1.1	0.4	1.1	-0.1	1.8	0.7	1.6		
May	0.8	1.2	0.0	0.3	0.7	2.5	0.6	1.6		
July	-0.2	1.3	0.0	0.5	0.1	2.5	-0.3	1.2		
September.....	-0.3	0.5	0.9	1.7	0.4	2.0	0.1	0.9		
November.....	0.2	1.1	0.0	1.5	-0.7	1.3	-0.2	1.5		

The Consumer Price Index for March 2020 is scheduled to be released on Friday, April 10, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria is published bi-monthly. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 94 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 28 percent of the total population.

The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.










































The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch17.pdf.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **Note: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The **Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MA-WV, Core Based Statistical Area** includes the District of Columbia; the counties of Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's in Maryland; the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren in Virginia; and the county of Jefferson in West Virginia.















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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2019	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019
All items.....		265.026		266.433	1.6	0.5	
Food and beverages		253.404		254.624	1.0	0.5	
Food		258.986		260.038	1.2	0.4	
Food at home		245.617	246.663	245.792	-0.4	0.1	-0.4
Cereals and bakery products		315.444		313.834	-3.1	-0.5	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		273.106		267.455	2.1	-2.1	
Dairy and related products		238.615		235.751	-0.6	-1.2	
Fruits and vegetables		265.779		271.505	0.8	2.2	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		211.466		215.619	-4.5	2.0	
Other food at home		199.914		201.073	0.2	0.6	
Food away from home.....		276.898		278.852	3.0	0.7	
Alcoholic beverages		199.279		201.676	-1.9	1.2	
Housing		278.349		281.319	2.2	1.1	
Shelter		336.001	336.350	338.393	2.3	0.7	0.6
Rent of primary residence		370.738	372.209	372.756	2.8	0.5	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		343.792	344.561	345.226	2.0	0.4	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)		343.792	344.561	345.226	2.0	0.4	0.2
Fuels and utilities.....		237.468		238.722	2.2	0.5	
Household energy		184.283	184.176	185.516	1.2	0.7	0.7
Energy services.....		188.486	188.485	190.046	1.3	0.8	0.8
Electricity		213.401	210.641	212.708	2.2	-0.3	1.0
Utility (piped) gas service		131.956	137.023	137.635	-1.1	4.3	0.4
Household furnishings and operations		106.801		111.397	1.7	4.3	
Apparel		161.295		156.581	-7.7	-2.9	
Transportation		215.692		215.812	2.9	0.1	
Private transportation		214.574		215.271	3.0	0.3	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		92.831		93.224	-1.1	0.4	
New vehicles(1).....		192.149		195.813	-2.4	1.9	
Used cars and trucks(1)		294.518		292.626	-1.1	-0.6	
Motor fuel		235.383	235.403	239.133	10.6	1.6	1.6
Gasoline (all types).....		232.743	232.782	236.395	10.8	1.6	1.6
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		226.563	226.643	230.246	11.1	1.6	1.6
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		235.965	236.655	239.566	8.4	1.5	1.2
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		252.876	252.322	255.575	8.7	1.1	1.3
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		893.216		876.170	3.6	-1.9	
Medical care		463.621		467.222	3.5	0.8	
Recreation(3).....		116.956		116.019	-2.9	-0.8	
Education and communication(3).....		151.891		152.560	2.4	0.4	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1)		1,409.296		1,407.834	3.6	-0.1	
Other goods and services		415.482		424.054	3.0	2.1	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		179.358		180.522	-0.1	0.6	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2019	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019
Commodities less food and beverages		142.120		143.273	-0.9	0.8	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		190.076		190.872	0.1	0.4	
Durables		98.318		99.582	-2.2	1.3	
Services		343.063		344.641	2.5	0.5	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter		236.498		237.539	1.2	0.4	
All items less medical care		255.640		256.943	1.4	0.5	
Commodities less food		144.767		145.978	-0.9	0.8	
Nondurables		220.798		221.759	0.6	0.4	
Nondurables less food		190.698		191.665	-0.1	0.5	
Services less rent of shelter(2)		362.662		363.262	2.8	0.2	
Services less medical care services		331.016		332.442	2.2	0.4	
Energy		210.520	210.469	212.881	5.8	1.1	1.1
All items less energy		272.603		273.970	1.3	0.5	
All items less food and energy		276.332		277.780	1.4	0.5	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a November 1977=100 base.
- (2) Indexes on a November 1982=100 base.
- (3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
- (4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
- (5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.